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LB 305, 314

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Thank you. Senator Baker.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members. I also rise in support of Senator Maxwell's amendment, and I commend him for working on this. He continually mentions reality and I can tell you, as a senator with a little more seniority than him, that reality does not always win out. It just doesn't always work that way. I think we're going to get a...the NSEA is going to get a big dose of reality here because they can either stick to their line and say we want it, LB 305, in its current form or nothing. Well, I think reality is going to set in here shortly for them and I don't know how they're going to justify that when we're willing to compromise and get started down this path of performance pay and so on. But they obviously are not interested in doing that from how they're going to justify the end result to their members. I continually hear that we're not doing anything for teachers in Nebraska, and I...I'm a big defender of a teacher. I'm married to one and then she'll be down here shortly. But when we increase state aid to education by over \$200 million in the next two years, don't tell me...that's an increase on top of what we're doing. Don't tell me we're not doing anything. That's going back to local districts. They have the option of how they spend that, \$200 million additional. We passed the loan forgiveness part of the budget. That's another \$2.7 million per year. That's doing something. Don't tell me we're not doing noth...or not doing anything here. We've changed the retirement benefits, increased those. We passed LB 314 dealing with certification requirements. Don't tell me we're not doing anything for the teachers. I get a couple of three e-mails from the same teachers every day. I'm tired of hearing that we're not doing anything for teachers. We are doing a lot for teachers and education, state of Nebraska. Senator Stuhr pointed out we're right at the top when it's figured as a percentage of what we pay to local school districts out of the state budget. One thing troubles me greatly, and Senator Bromm touched upon this this morning. I brought it up last week, we were on the debate of this bill, and that was the Crete School Board decision handed down by the CIR on what they tried to do down there and this typifies, to me, the problem. Here's a school district,